

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION**

**Statement of**

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**Before the**

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION SECURITY  
AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION  
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**July 15, 2009**

Good afternoon, Chairwoman Jackson Lee, Ranking Member Dent, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee. It is my pleasure to appear here to discuss General Aviation security. Today I would like to discuss TSA's engagement with key industry stakeholders to develop appropriate security measures that minimize General Aviation risk and our process going forward.

General Aviation includes all operations outside of scheduled commercial air carrier flights and military operations. More than 600,000 pilots, 200,000 aircraft, and 19,000 airports and landing facilities are included in General Aviation. General Aviation aircraft range in size from small Cessnas to privately-owned jumbo jets such as the Boeing 747. The vast majority of the General Aviation community is responsible and concerned about security. Much of the input we have received during our industry discussion reflects best-practice security procedures. We would like to thank the industry representatives who have contributed considerable time and effort to provide valuable input to this process.

### General Aviation Risk

There has been long-standing Federal regulation of parts of General Aviation security. “For hire” passengers and crew on General Aviation aircraft greater than 12,500 pounds have been vetted for many years. International passengers and crew are vetted prior to overseas departure. The airspace over the National Capitol Region is permanently restricted; and General Aviation regulates temporary airspace restrictions over POTUS travel locations, major sporting events, and special events such as national political party conventions or G8 summits, for example. There is no specific threat in GA although there have been past incidents involving the use of GA aircraft. Yet as with other transportation modes where there is no specific threat but there is significant risk—for example, toxic chemicals transported by rail in urban areas, or hazardous materials trucking—TSA takes prudent measures to minimize potential vulnerabilities and having those vulnerabilities exploited in high consequence situations.

### TSA’s Industry Engagement Process is Working

The risk for domestic General Aviation is in the potential consequences of a large aircraft being used 1) as a weapon (as on 9/11), or 2) to introduce dangerous articles into the airside of commercial airports. In order to reduce GA vulnerabilities, TSA began a public rulemaking process in 2008. The TSA rulemaking process is working as designed.

TSA proposed a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in October 2008, held five public hearings throughout the United States, received thousands of public comments, and extended the public comment period through February 2009. The day following the close of the comment period, TSA invited General Aviation stakeholders and other

interested parties to workshops held in April, May, and June. Industry groups included were the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, the National Business Aviation Association, the General Aviation Manufacturers Association, the National Air Transportation Association, the Experimental Aircraft Association, the American Association of Airport Executives, the Airports Council International, the National Association of State Aviation Officials and specific operators such as Gulfstream Corporation, Limited Brands, Net Jets, Flex Jets, Centennial Airport, and White Plains Airport.

At these workshops, General Aviation security issues were discussed at length. As a result of this valuable input from stakeholders, TSA is developing appropriate protocols to restrict the ability for terrorists to:

- 1) pilot large GA aircraft;
- 2) purchase or lease large GA aircraft;
- 3) steal a large GA aircraft;
- 4) overtake control of a large GA aircraft; or
- 5) bring dangerous articles into the airside of a commercial airport on a GA aircraft.

These protocols reflect many best-of-industry security practices used by corporations worldwide.

We expect that the measures developed from the industry workshop comments will be incorporated into a revised or new NPRM, which will be available for public comment in the coming months. We will continue our dialogue with industry until the regulatory process is reopened for general public comment.

## Summary

To recap, we recognize there is General Aviation risk. Through close stakeholder collaboration, we are developing a series of sensible security measures to minimize risk and we expect to release those measures for public comment in the upcoming months.

Thank you, and I will be happy to answer any questions.